



**LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Henry J. Mroz Administration Office**  
**155 Merrimack Street**  
**Lowell, Massachusetts 01852**

**John J. Leahy**  
**Mayor and Chairperson**

**Andre P. Descoteaux**  
**Vice-Chairperson**

**Hilary Clark**  
**Michael Dillon Jr.**  
**Robert J. Hoey Jr.**  
**Connie A. Martin**

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**Curriculum & Instruction**  
**Subcommittee Meeting**

**Wednesday, October 14, 2020**  
**City Hall – Council Chamber**  
**6:30 p.m.**

Subcommittee Members Present:	Chairperson Connie Martin, Hilary Clark and Jackie Doherty
School Committee Members Present:	Andy Descoteaux and Robert Hoey
School Department Personnel Present:	Robin Desmond, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Linus Guillory, Chief Schools Officer Michael Lovato, Director of Special Education

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Chairperson Martin called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. The following agenda item was discussed:

**1. Special Education Metrics & Key Performance Indicators**

Ms. Martin asked Ms. Desmond to address the Subcommittee. Ms. Desmond spoke about the metrics that the district is monitoring throughout the year. She stated that the presentation is comprised of the following:

- Compliance Data
- Enrollment & Management – Remote and In-Person Learning
- Student Outcomes
- Instructional Supports
- Family Engagement & Outreach

Mr. Lovato then addressed the Subcommittee and introduced the two (2) Assistant Special Education Directors and stated that they will be also speaking to the Subcommittee. He stated that the district is making progress in the Special Education Department, but we still have a lot of work to do.

Ms. Pennell then spoke to the Subcommittee about compliance data and stated that the Evaluation Team Chairs (ETC) and School Psychologists have developed a Google sheet tracking system to monitor initial evaluations, re-evaluations, annual reviews, and additional meetings. She stated that they have been tracking this information since the spring and they are tracking the progress on 287 initial evaluations, 541 re-evaluations and 724 annual reviews. She then spoke about the process for initial evaluations. She stated that these evaluations are done with the proper spacing and Plexiglas is put in place when needed. She spoke about the testing procedures (virtual testing as well) that have been developed in collaboration with the school psychologists. She stated that the ETC's and school Psychologists have kept at least one (1) of their buildings from last year to continue consistency for the students. The following school testing sites and testing and virtual testing procedures include the following:

- Pyne, Daley, Murkland, Wang, Reilly, McAvinnue, Stoklosa, Lincoln, McAuliffe, Lowell High School and Shaughnessy
- Safety protocol for evaluations.
- Designated testing sites.
- PPE requirements.
- Screening questions.
- Translation protocol.
- Parent/Guardian attendance and interviews.
- Letter to Parents.
- Staff attending trainings.
- Connecting with other urban districts.
- Working with individual cohort and experts.

Ms. Pennell continued and stated that they are supporting Special Education teachers by completing backlogged academic testing and the process for the initial evaluations is as follows:

#### **Speech and Language Pathologists (SLP)**

- 2 SLP's assigned to support non-enrolled evaluation backlog.
- All other evaluations (initials or re-evaluations) assigned to building SLP and re-assigned within the cohort as necessary to accommodate for remote vs. in person staff.
- Additional testing sites: Moody, STEM, Morey

#### **Occupational Therapists (OT)**

- All evaluations assigned to building OT and re-assigned within the cohort as necessary to accommodate for remote vs. in person staff.
- Testing sites at buildings.

#### **Physical Therapists (PT)**

- All evaluations assigned to building PT.
- Testing sites at buildings.

Ms. Pennell then spoke about the REED process for re-evaluations (Review of Existing Evaluation Data). She spoke to the Subcommittee about all the benefits the students receive by using the REED process. Mr. Lovato added that it is required under state and federal law and by doing this it reduces the amount of testing and the re-evaluation testing (this would be around 80 – 85 percent of our kids).

Ms. Martin asked if new goals are still being done during this process.

Mr. Lovato stated that it is absolutely being done.

She continued speaking about the COVID-19 Learning Plans. She stated that per the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) “school districts must engage families in a discussion about how services may be provided differently due to COVID-19 and document those changes in writing”. She stated that the Special Education Department is required to provide all services in the IEP and consider how services, accommodations, and modifications are provided differently in person vs. remote. She stated that you can’t amend an IEP and “stay put” rights are still in place. She concluded by saying that all case managers are currently in the process of documenting how services will be provided for both in-person learning (if applicable) and remote learning.

Ms. Maluccio then addressed the Subcommittee and spoke about the district’s day school and our substantially separate programs. She stated that parents have the right at any time to go full remote. She stated that the Laura Lee School currently has nineteen (19) students in-person and four (4) students remote, Dr. Janice Adie Day School has forty-one (41) in-person and nine (9) remote students and the Leblanc School has twenty-seven (27) in-person and nine (9) remote students. The substantially separate programs are as follows:

➤ LEAP	In-Person	77	Remote	64
➤ CSA	In-Person	215	Remote	118
➤ Adjustment	In-Person	83	Remote	62
➤ Language Based	In-Person	10	Remote	9
➤ Mainstream (DHOH)	In-Person	661	Remote	1,242

Ms. Maluccio stated that since the start of school the district has 211 new students. She spoke about the following student outcomes:

- Progress with IEP goals – Academic and Social Emotional
- Attendance – In-Person and Remote
- Suspensions- In-Person and Remote
- District assessments – RAZ kids, iXL, F&P, iReady
- Specialized Assessments – TeachTown, Unique, Edmark, Language Live and RAVE-O

Ms. Maluccio stated that we are working very hard on progress reports and the expectation of the progress reports are that they should have specific and descriptive data regarding the student.

She concluded her part of the presentation speaking about mask wearing on the bus and the support for students with transportation. She said that staff riding and modeling on bus, bus training, visual supports for bus drivers and monitors and proving teachers with supportive



curriculum that addresses mask wearing have all been put in place. She stated that coming back they knew everything had to be individualized and they wanted to make sure that they had what they needed to teach their students. This was achieved with technology supports, vision support, DHOH programming and specialized instructional technology and also by making sure students have what they need.

Mr. Lovato then addressed the Subcommittee about connecting with families and how this is happening in our private schools as well. He stated that IEP's are being delivered. He said that before the lottery began his department contacted all of our sub-separate families and all information received was able to be reported to the administration. He spoke about Kim Porter, Special Education Family Advocate who has been making 50 – 75 phone calls a day asking parents if they're getting access as well as speaking to them about translations and letting parents know their due process rights and what to expect during the overall process. The Special Education Department has their own social media page and they have updated information on the page for both parents and teachers.

Ms. Martin asked what the overall population is.

Mr. Lovato stated 2600 – 2700.

Ms. Martin asked if there have been changes with DESE or the Federal government regarding the regulations during COVID-19.

Mr. Lovato stated that there have been no changes, but he believes they're making significant progress with the shift using the psychologists.

Ms. Martin asked if the Special Education Department can show the Committee in an ongoing way how the district is meeting the metrics, so they can recognize these times in case the district needs additional supports or other options. She asked if an ongoing monthly progress report can be provided so it can be openly tracked.

Mr. Lovato stated that it is already being done and that can be provided. He stated that he believes they will hit their marks.

Ms. Desmond added that they can come up with something basic and provide it monthly.

Mr. Hoey stated that he believes the kids are safer in our schools. He stated that the SPED PAC is great and was complimentary of the Special Education staff.

Mr. Descoteaux asked Mr. Lovato to explain the IEP and evaluation process. How is the backlog being dealt with. Asked about transportation.

Mr. Lovato stated that the psychologists are helping with the backlog. He stated that IEP's come up on the calendar and each teacher has a caseload and they too will encounter backlog. He said that at times they need to offer additional services or extension. He said that he has been working Mr. Descoteaux, Transportation Director and they had a meeting with the bus companies. He also explained the IEP process.

Ms. Clark made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin made a motion to send the District Wide Goals: Key Performance Indicators to the School Improvement Subcommittee; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Doherty made a motion to adjourn at 7:59: p.m.; seconded by Ms. Clark. 3 yeas APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robin Desmond". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Robin Desmond, Chief Academic Officer  
for Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent and  
Secretary, Lowell School Committee

RAD/mes